I never felt like this before by btrzv

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You know when they say “I never felt like this before”? It’s generally in cheesy love songs, not something you actually hear someone say. Well, maybe when people do say it, they don’t really understand what it means. Maybe they just mean they never loved someone this much before, or maybe they never even fell in love before. But there can also be so much more to “this” than just love.

I never felt like this before

Author's Note:

> This is my first Harringrove fic. Honestly, this is just one more excuse for me to think about them being together, ok?
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> Also, I didn't plan on this being a multi-chaptered fic, so I'm sorry if the end of each chapter feels weird or something. I really didn't expected for it to be this long.
>
> Any mistakes are my own, feel free to correct me in the comments if you see anything.

You know when they say “I never felt like this before”? It’s generally in cheesy love songs, not something you actually hear someone say. Well, maybe when people do say it, they don’t really understand what it means. Maybe they just mean they never loved someone this much before, or maybe they never even fell in love before. But there can also be so much more to “this” than just love.

Sometimes (probably once in a lifetime, actually) you meet someone and it’s just *different*. You certainly won’t notice it at first, because it’s so quiet. It’s someone new and that person starts giving you new experiences, new opinions, new sensations, and before you notice, you just *change* (for better, hopefully).

Well, at least that’s what happened to Billy Hargrove. He always had so much trouble in his life. His mother died, his dad turned out to be an asshole and his step-sister hated him. When Billy tried to talk to his father about his sexuality, thinking he could trust him, he nearly got beaten to death. Of course his father wouldn’t kill him, but it sure felt like it. Then all turned into a living hell and everything started to become a reason for Neil Hargrove to pick a fight with his son. Then, all of a sudden, Neil made them move to a different town because of Billy’s step-mother, because “she wanted to live somewhere quiet” and apparently California wasn’t quiet enough. After they moved, Billy tried to make the best out of his social life, since it was the only

aspect of his life that wasn't ruined yet. Of course, now he was constantly worrying about people finding out about him being gay. Hawkins, Indiana was very different from San Francisco. Hawkins was a small town, everyone knew each other and people *talked*. It annoyed Billy that everyone cared so much about other people's life.

Moving wasn't supposed to be so bad. He could start over, because nobody knew him in this new town, but he was so angry. Angry for leaving his entire life behind, angry for moving for a stupid reason, angry because he was still dependent on his father and had to do every fucking little thing he said. And also angry for not being old or brave enough to just walk away from all of this.

Billy was so angry with his own life that he started to take it out on other people. That's how he met Steve Harrington. He hated Steve because Steve's life was perfect. Steve used to run Hawkins High, he was the king of the school, had a perfect girlfriend, had money, had friends and was the best player in his basketball team. And he was an actual cool guy, Billy noticed that, and he just hated him even more for it. So Billy decided to take everything he could from Steve. He started by taking the stupid title of king of Hawkins High, with that he took his popularity and his friends. Billy was always charming, and it didn't take much to gain everyone's attention. Then Billy took Steve's position as the best player on the court, but that was because he was actually good at basketball. A few weeks passed and Billy heard some rumors, Steve's girlfriend, Nancy Wheeler, had broken up with him. It had nothing to do with Billy, but he counted it as one of his achievements on ruining Steve's perfect life.

If you asked Billy if he felt any better after draining out Steve's social life like that, he would say "It's not like Harrington needed any of that". However, if you could actually see inside his mind, you would know he felt emptier than ever, but he had an incredible ability to shut it down anytime he started to notice it. He let the anger reign and it never stopped. He took everything he could from Steve's perfect life and it still wasn't enough.

Then one day, Billy beat the shit out of Steve. He couldn't even remember what started it. He was drunk and maybe it was just a stupid comment Steve made that triggered an outburst of anger from Billy, made him see red. The only thing he could think about was that

maybe this was what his dad felt like when he hit Billy, and he understood this rage and he felt terrible about it. It happened in a stupid house party and if some other people hadn't held him back, maybe Billy would've killed Steve.

Next time Billy saw Steve at school, he thought Steve didn't even have his pretty face anymore, Billy ruined it too.

After that, it was quiet, inside and out of Billy's mind. It was like he had completed his mission. He ruined someone and it was supposed to make him feel better, but he was still angry. Except now Billy was angry at himself. He kept remembering the sensation of his fist connecting to Steve's jaw and it hurt. Not a physical pain, but the knowledge that he was able to lose control like that, it hurt him deep inside. He couldn't help but compare himself to his father. He didn't want to be like that, he didn't want to be that monster.

And that's how he started to change. He was quiet, for a few weeks, he still enjoyed his popularity and being the best at something, even if it was just basketball. But he avoided Steve with everything he could, he would not even meet his eyes. Billy was ashamed and that was a completely new sensation. Of course, Steve had healed very well and there wasn't any real damage, which meant he still had his pretty face, but it didn't bother Billy anymore.

Billy didn't know how to apologize, so he decided not to. It took him an entire month to be able to look at Steve in the eyes. Sometimes they would exchange some words during practice, but it was just game stuff, nothing important. Billy started to feel a bit more comfortable now and the anger wasn't so wild anymore. Maybe he just needed to experience his worst so he could finally calm down, after all.

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It would be an understatement to say it was weird the first time they actually talked. Billy wasn't expecting it. He was responsible for picking Max up at a friend's house that night, but he got there early, so he decided to grab a smoke, leaning against his car. He sighed when he noticed it was the last cigarette in his pack, but lighted it anyway. He tried to make it last, but soon enough it was finished and

he put the cigarette out, stepping on it with his shoe. It wasn't even two minutes later when he heard another car approaching the house's driveway. It also didn't take so long for Billy to recognize Steve's car and his hair as he got out.

At first, they just nodded at each other. Steve looked like he didn't know what to do with himself. First he looked like he was gonna walk up to the doorstep and ring the doorbell, but he just took two steps and looked like he decided against it. Then he leaned against his own car and looked at his wristwatch. He started moving his hands kinda weirdly and looked up at the sky. Billy wasn't actually staring, but the boy was moving just a bit too much for everything to go unnoticed. Then it got even more weird because he actually turned to Billy and walked a couple of steps towards him, but still not getting too far from his own car. Billy thought about making a witty remark, but before he could do it, Steve was talking.

"Do you have a cigarette?" Steve asked, putting his hands on his back pockets, like he was trying to look harmless or something. Billy was caught off guard for a moment, because he wasn't really expecting Harrington to talk to him, let alone ask him something.

"Uhm… I just smoked my last one, actually." Billy answered, taking the empty pack of cigarettes from his pocket and lightly shaking it in front of him to show Steve it was really empty. For some reason, he thought Steve wouldn't believe him if he didn't show it to him.

"Oh," Steve nodded, "Ok, it's fine." Steve leaned back against the side of his own car again, still keeping a distance from Billy.

"You sure? You look distressed, Harrington" Billy tried to go with a humorous tone, but it probably just sounded mocking, because Steve just shot him an irritated look instead of answering, "Ok, sorry, I didn't mean it like that". Billy instantly regretted saying that because it was so stupid that he was apologizing for that but not for bashing Steve's face in. Also, Steve looked a bit weirded out by the apology too and just nodded at Billy again.

Silence fell over them again and it was as awkward as it could be. Steve kept moving his hands, putting them on his pockets and then taking them out soon after. It was starting to annoy Billy, so he

decided *whatever* and tried talking to Steve again.

“Are you in a hurry or something?” Billy asked, pulling his lighter from his pocket and flicking it just to play with the flame. It took Steve a few seconds to answer, as if he was deciding it was the right thing to do or not.

“No, I’m a bit early, actually. I just got out of the post office and thought it would be ok to wait 20 minutes.” Steve spoke quickly, almost like he didn’t need to think about what he was saying. It was weirdly funny, but Billy didn’t laugh.

“Me too. I mean, the waiting part. I’m supposed to pick Max up at five, but I’d rather wait here than home.” Billy said still flicking his lighter, now passing his thumb through the flame in a quick movement that didn’t burn. Steve didn’t say anything again, so Billy tried asking one more time about what was troubling him, “The post office? Is that why you look so nervous?” Steve sighed, but it didn’t sound annoying or irritated, so Billy looked up at him.

“Yeah… I just posted my first college application.” Steve said, now looking back at Billy.

“That doesn’t sound like a reason to be all worked up like that… I mean, I only see people that nervous when they get the response letter.” He heard Steve sigh again and immediately thought he fucked up the conversation again.

“The thing is, I don’t even know if I want to go to college, but my parents are putting so much pressure on me because of it that it’s driving me insane.” Now Steve sounded very irritated, but at least it wasn’t at Billy. He sighed once again before continuing, “Sorry, this sounds so stupid when I actually say it out loud, you know? There are people with actual problems and here I am, complaining.”

“Don’t worry, man, who am I to judge your problems?” Billy tried that humorous tone again and apparently it worked out this time, because Steve let out a small chuckle at that.

There was a little moment of silence when Billy thought that was the end of the conversation, but then Steve was combing his fingers

through his hair and speaking again.

“God, I’d kill for a cigarette right now”, he looked up at the sky again and Billy looked at him. Even frustrated he still looked pretty, and Billy hated this town for making him be an asshole to this boy. Deep inside he knew he was the only one to blame (maybe his dad too), but it was not the time to think about it.

“If only you had arrived five minutes earlier…” Billy said and put his lighter back in his pocket.

“Yeah, as if you’d share your last cigarette with me…” Now Steve used a sarcastic tone that made Billy be taken aback. For a moment, he had forgotten how weird this was, both of them talking as if nothing had ever happened, as if Billy wasn’t the asshole who beat Steve up. And he remembered things between them weren’t really ok and maybe wouldn’t ever be, so Billy just looked down instead of replying. He looked at his watch and realized there were still ten minutes until five, and it felt like time wasn’t passing at all.

After a bit more of silence, Steve started humming to a song Billy didn’t recognize. It was ok for a while, until Billy realized he just kept repeating the same part of the song over and over again. It started to annoy Billy, until he couldn’t take it anymore and decided to make conversation again.

“I didn’t know you had a sibling,” That was the probable reason Steve was there right now. Billy looked up at Steve again, who stopped humming and looked back at Billy, seeming way more calm now for some reason.

“Oh, I don’t. I’m picking up Dustin, the one with curly hair, you know? I babysit him sometimes when his mom is working late. He’s a nice kid, very smart.” Billy nodded in response and looked at the house, it was a small one with a badly lit driveway. It was the Byers’ house, Billy knew, but the only Byers he had actually met was Jonathan, from school, and he was pretty much a loser, so they never talked.

“I’d never take you for the babysitter type, Harrington, or the needing money type.”

“I don’t really do it for the money, I actually enjoy being with these kids.”

“Careful there, man, you’re starting to sound like a creep. And one of these kids is my step-sister.” Billy said, half-joking, half-serious. Steve laughed anyway. It was the first time Billy heard him laugh, ever.

“Don’t worry, they are safe, I promise. After all, Max is pretty tough. I think she’d probably kick my ass if I tried anything.” *Kick my ass.* There it was the elephant in the room again. Billy sighed and after a moment of silence, he decided to say something about it, an apology, maybe.

“Look, about that…” Billy was interrupted just then, by the front door of the house opening and six little pre-teens laughing and talking very loudly as they got out of the house. Steve looked like he got pretty distracted by them, so Billy decided to drop the matter. Maybe apologizing wasn’t the right thing to do right now.

Steve started talking to the kids, so Billy took that chance and just got inside the car. He noticed the looks some of the boys were sending his way, he always noticed, every time he was picking up Max. They probably knew about the fight, and apparently, they were very protective of Steve. Or maybe Max had been talking shit about Billy. *Whatever*. He lightly pressed the honk twice to get Max’s attention and she promptly obeyed, picking up her pace and getting inside the car. And just like that, Billy just drove off, not wanting to think too much about this conversation at all.